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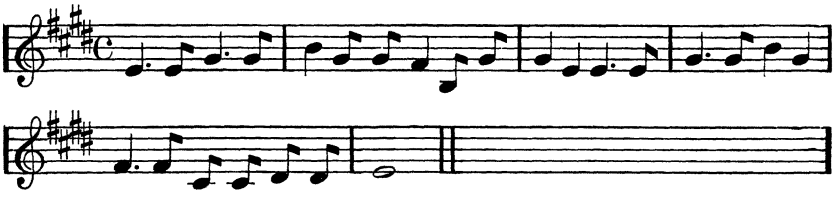
## RING-GAMES FROM GEORGIA.

BY LORAINE DARBY.

I SAW in southern Georgia a number of ring-games which I believe are peculiar to the colored children of that region. One of the prettiest is "The May-Pole Song." One girl skips about inside the ring, and at the singing of the fourth line bows to the one she chooses. Then both "jump for joy," a peculiar step rather like a clog, which outsiders find very difficult to learn. Then the song is repeated, the second girl choosing; and so on.



All around the May-pole,
  The May-pole, the May-pole,
All around the May-pole,
  Now, Miss Sallie, won't you bow?
Now, Miss Sallie, won't you jump for joy,
  Jump for joy, jump for joy?
Now, Miss Sallie, won't you jump for joy?
  Now, Miss Sallie, won't you bow?

A game which is most amusing to watch is "Good Old Egg-Bread." The leader shouts one line, and the others answer with the next. The rhythm is very strong, and they stamp their feet most energetically as they circle.

Did you go to the hen-house?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you get any eggs?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you put 'em in the bread?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you stir it 'roun'?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you bake it brown?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you hand it 'roun'?
  Yes, ma'am!

Good old egg-bread,
  Shake 'em, shake 'em!
Good old egg-bread,
  Shake 'em, shake 'em!

Did you go to the lynchin'?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did they lynch that man?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did the man cry?
  Yes, ma'am!
How did he cry?
  Baa, baa!
How did he cry?
  Baa, baa!

Did you go to the wedding?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you get any wine?
  Yes, ma'am!
Did you get any cake?
  Yes, ma'am!
How did it taste?
  So good!
How did it taste?
  So good!
Good old egg-bread,
  Shake 'em, shake 'em!
Good old egg-bread,
  Shake 'em, shake 'em!
Bow, Mr. Blackbird, bow, Mr. Crow.
Bow, Mr. Blackbird, bow no mo'!

Similar to this is "'Way Down Yonder."

Way down yonder
  Soup to soup!
Where dem white folks
  Soup to soup!
Just singin' an' prayin'
  Soup to soup!
Tryin' to make man
  Soup to soup!
Biscuits hot
  Soup to soup!
Corn-bread cold
  Soup to soup!
Thank God Almighty
  Soup to soup!
Just give me a little mo'
  Soup to soup!

In "Old Green Field," too, the leader and the ring sing alternately. One inside chooses, and the action follows the words.

Old green field,
  Rock to your love!
Old green field,
  Rock to your love!
Tell me who you love!
  Rock to your love!
Tell me who you love!
  Rock to your love!

O Miss ————! your name is called.
Come, take a seat right beside your love!
Kiss her once and let her go.
Don't let her sit in this chair no mo'.
Old green field,
  Rock to your love!
Old green field,
  Rock to your love!

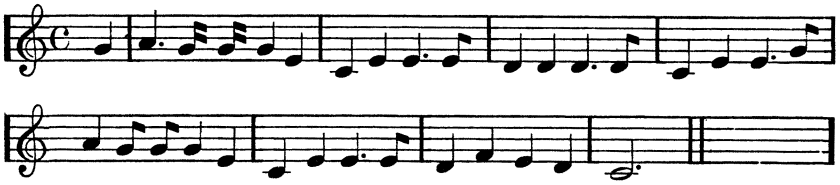
"Take Your Lover in the Ring" plainly dates from slavery times.

My old mistress promised me
Before she died she would set me free.
  Take your lover in the ring.
    I don't care!
  Take your lover in the ring.
    I don't care!
Now she's dead and gone to hell.
I hope that devil will burn her well!
  Take your lover in the ring.
    I don't care!
  Take your lover in the ring.
    I don't care!
  It's a golden ring.
    I don't care!
  It's a silver ring.
    I don't care!

In "High O" the action is very swift. A girl skips quickly once around inside the ring, chooses another, and takes her place.

In come another one,
  High O!
A mighty pretty little one,
  High O!
Then get about, go!
  High O!
Then get about, go!
  High O!

Perhaps the most charming of all is "This Lady wears a Dark-Green Shawl." The action is carried out by two in the centre, choosing as in the other games, in turn.



This lady she wears a dark-green shawl,
  A dark-green shawl, a dark-green shawl.
This lady she wears a dark-green shawl—
  I love her to my heart!

Now choose for your lover, honey, my love!
  Honey, my love! honey, my love!
Now choose for your lover, honey, my love!—
  I love her to my heart!

Now dance with your lover, honey, my love! etc.
Throw your arms 'round your lover, etc.
Farewell to your lover—etc.

KALAMAZOO, MICH.